benchmark its performance against global standards. Work is in progress on a number of projects included in the Programme.

(b) to (e) Apart from the 12 major ports under the Government of India, as part of the Government's efforts to promote coastal shipping, the Department of Shipping has identified select non-major ports for development under NMDP. Out of the two non-major ports, namely, Azhikkal and Vizhinjam, details of which were submitted by the Government of Kerala, Azhikkal Port has been identified for the purpose. In addition, six other non-major ports, namely, Gopalpur in Orissa, Malpe in Karnataka, Dharamtar in Maharashtra, Magdalla in Gujarat, Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu and Gangavaram in Andhra Pradesh and Azhikkal in Kerala have also been identified for purpose.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Setting up of New Nuclear Plants

256. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether is it proposed to set up more nuclear plants following Indo-U.S. deal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) to (c) The ongoing Indo-US dialogue for international cooperation in the nuclear energy field can open up the possibilities for setting up nuclear power plants based on imports. The details can be finalized only on conclusion of the dialogue for international cooperation.

Nuclear plants in West Bengal and Orissa

257. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B. J. PANDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to locate a nuclear plant in West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the norms that have been laid down for setting up of such plants in the country;

(d) whether such a plant is also proposed to be located in the backward State of Orissa; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) The technical suitability of the site in terms of seismicity, foundation conditions etc., magnitude of land acquisition and rehabilitation of the affected population, availability of large water body to meet the requirements of cooling water, population density, power evacuation and transportation of heavy equipment are important norms for site selection. Statutory clearances from the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board and the Ministry of Environment and Forests are also obtained before setting up of a project.

(d) and (e) The Government of India has set up a Site Selection Committee (SSC), to evaluate sites for locating future nuclear power plants. The SSC has requested all the coastal States in the country to offer coastal sites for evaluation. Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa and West Bengal have offered sites, for evaluation. The above-metioned sites are for future use and there is no proposal, presently under consideration of the Government, for setting up a nuclear power projects at any of these sites.

Uranium plants in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh

258. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to set up a Uranium Processing Plant in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh; and

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be set up?